Commercial agreements with Iraq

1719. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the existing commercial bilateral agreements with Iraq;

(b) whether Government have analysed impact of US attacl^ on Iraq to covet crude stock bilateral agreements;

(c) If so, the steps taken to protect the commercial interest of India with Iraq; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Under the ongoing Sanctions Regime, all existing commercial exchanges with Iraq are governed by the Oil for Food Programme administered by the UN Office of the Iraq Programme. In the twelve six-monthly phases since the introductifen of this programme in 1996, Indian companies have won export contracts valued at approximately $ 1.1 billion.

(b) India does not have any bilateral agreements for supply of oil and has not lifted crude directly from Iraq since December, 2000. Some disruption of oil supplies and an increase in prices from other Gulf suppliers can be expected.

(c) and (d) the outbreak of hostilities in the region would affect commercial contracts under implementation or which have not been implemented. India has taken up this matter with the Office of the Iraq Programme in the United Nations.

Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding

1720. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding has not been awarded since 1995;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) how the prize money of Rs. 25 lakh has been utilized over the years since then; and

(d) whether any action is being taken to confer this award for the year 2001?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) The Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding for the year 1995 was awarded in the year 1997. Despite concerted efforts having been made, the awardee has not yet been able to come to India to receive the award.The awardee for the year 1999, for which the Jury met in December, 2000, could not be decided upon. The Jury has not met since.

(c) The prize money has not been utilized.

(d) The Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding is a continuing award and is being reviewed administratively with a view to making it a regular feature.

Attack on Indian showroom In Nepal

1721. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a car showroom belonging to an Indian businessman In Kathmandu was attacked by Maoists causing damage to 22 vehicles and resulting a loss of Rs. 50 crores;

(b) whether Government have obtained the details of attack; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard and action taken by Nepal Government/ authorities to punish the culprits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) No, there has been no attack on a car showroom belonging to any Indian businessman jn Kathmandu.

On September 1, 2002, Maoists attacked a car showroom in Kathmandu belonging to a Nepali businessman of Indian origin. 15 cars were reportedly damaged and 6-7 cars burnt. The estimated damages were between Nepali Rs. 40-50 lakhs. A case has been registered by Nepal Police authorities on September 1, 2002. Investigations are continuing at present.